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## REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTICES.

A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles. Edited by Dr. J. A. H. MURRAY. Part VII. Consignificant-Crouching. Part VIII, Sect. I. Crouchmas-Czech, completing vol. II (C). Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1893.

Dr. Murray's great Dictionary is progressing slowly but surely. The letter C is now finished, and Vol. III, Part I, E-Every, edited by Mr. Henry Bradley, appeared two years ago. We are promised soon another part of volume III, but such an undertaking cannot be hurried, however impatient readers may get. The part before us, we are told, contains 5414 main words, 936 combinations, and 1190 subordinate words and forms: total, 7540. "Of the 5414 main words, 1208 ( $22\frac{1}{3}$  per cent.) are marked † as obsolete, and 171 ( $3\frac{1}{3}$  per cent.), ‡ as alien or incompletely naturalized." Dr. Murray notes in this part many words of interesting etymology and form-history, and remarks upon them with great truth: "Research into the history of words, as of families, sometimes merely shows that current notions as to their origin are historically untenable, and that their actual origin is involved in obscurity." An interesting illustration of form-history is given in the case of the word *Cross*. Previous etymological dictionaries—even that of Professor Skeat—have been content with telling us that it is derived from Latin *crucem* through O. French *crois*, and giving us the collateral Romance forms. Dr. Murray informs us that "the Latin *crux* entered our language by three distinct routes, and in four different forms, and that it was the form which came by the most circuitous route that was eventually the survivor." This form was not, as is usually thought, derived from the Norman-French, but was "that which early Christianity had naturalized in Ireland, and Irish missionary zeal had communicated to the Norsemen—the Latin-Irish-Norse-North English *cross*, that became the permanent form in our language." If we turn to the word itself we find the earliest example of the use of the word in the local name *Normannes cros*, in a 'Record of Gifts by Bishop Athelwold to Medeshamstede' (i. e. Peterborough), *circa* 963–84, 100 years before the Normans came over, hence *Normannes* here is *Norðmannes*, the Northman, the so-called *Dane* of history. Again, Wace, in his *Roman de Rou*, *circa* 1175, gives us as the battle-cry of Harold at Hastings (Senlac), "*Olicrosse sovent crioent*," and he explains it: "*Olicrosse est en engleiz Ke Sainte Croix est en franceiz*." This is conclusive that *cross* was in Northern English long before *croix* (*crois*, *croiz*), and it stayed. If we had the documentary means of investigation, the inquiry might deserve consideration, whether its introduction was not due to the influence of Iona on Northumbria, and hence antecedent to Norse influence on English, the Northern *cross* corresponding to the Southern *röd*. As an illustration of the extent and thoroughness with which this work is prepared, it may be added that the word *Cross* fills *fifteen* columns, besides *seventeen* more devoted to its compounds.

There are a few points that have been noticed in turning over the pages which may deserve mention, not by way of criticism, but as showing that it is impossible to embrace everything even in such a comprehensive dictionary. Under the word *Cracker*, 4, the quotation from the *Beacon* (Boston) that "the word *Cracker* . . . is supposed to have been suggested by their cracking whips over oxen or mules in taking their cotton to the market" (!), is likely to perpetuate a false derivation. The true derivation is, much more probably, that these country people lived on *cracked* corn, as some of them still do, which derivation is given in the Century Dictionary. That it is not 'a contemptuous name' may be inferred from the fact that the Georgia students' club of the University of Virginia has assumed the name of 'Georgia Crackers.' Perhaps the common game of *Crack-loo*, or *Crack-a-loo*, as some call it, is unknown in England. At all events, the word is not found in the New English Dictionary, and for the information of the editor it may be mentioned that the game is played by two or more persons, and consists in shooting a small coin to the ceiling and letting it fall near a crack in the floor. The owner of whichever coin falls nearest the designated crack 'takes the pile.' The term is of uncertain etymology, and the spelling may not be that given above, as it is not found in any dictionary that I have examined, although common enough colloquially. It has been suggested that the name may be shortened from 'Crack or lose'; or it may be derived from compounding the word *Loo*, the game at cards, with the word *Crack*, which plays the important part in the game. The same may be said for the game *Crap*s, so common among 'American citizens of African descent,' and, as it is a violation of the statute against gambling, it often results in bringing the ebony players before the Police Court. I am informed that it is played with dice, generally three, and consists in shuffling them in the hand and throwing them on the ground or floor, the players betting on the number that will turn up, the numbers *seven* and *eleven* being those commonly used. It is popularly termed 'shooting craps.'<sup>1</sup> Dr. Murray can put it in his next issue, or his *omnium gatherum* of an appendix.

I do not find that some terms of our American university slang have crossed the water. I look in vain for the verb *Cork* in the sense of failing on a recitation: it may be transitive or intransitive, according as it is applied to professor or student. I find the terms *Cram* and *Crib* duly recorded, being doubtless in use by English-speaking students all over the world, but the earliest example of the former as noun is taken from 'Verdant Green' (1853). Bristed, in his 'Five Years in an English University,' written in 1851 (see A. J. P. XIII 494), had already defined it in his glossary of 'The Cantab Language.'

If each writer will contribute from his store of colloquialisms and slang, we may eventually secure a complete *Thesaurus totius Anglicitatis*.

Part VIII, Section I, of the New English Dictionary completes the letter C and the second volume, as this letter occupies a whole volume. The number of words treated in this volume is 29,295, made up as follows: 21,295 main words, 3461 special combinations, and 4539 subordinate words. Of the main words, 15,852 are current, 4515 obsolete, and 928 alien = 21½ per cent. obso-

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the 'pile' is here the 'crop,' *in ore Africano* 'crap,' hence the name of the game.

lete, and  $4\frac{3}{8}$  per cent. alien or not fully naturalized. Dr. Murray gives also the whole number of words so far treated under A, B and C as 60,549, being 43,527 main words, 7753 special combinations, and 9269 subordinate words. Of these main words, 31,232 are current, 10,497 obsolete, and 1798 alien, showing that for these three letters " $71\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. are now current and fully naturalized,  $24\frac{1}{8}$  per cent. are obsolete,  $4\frac{1}{8}$  per cent. alien or imperfectly naturalized; more than three-fourths of all the words included being thus in living use." This proportion will doubtless hold good throughout, and we may thus get some idea of the extent of our present vocabulary. We are told that the letter C is the second largest letter in the alphabet, being exceeded only by S; that it contains nearly as many words as A and B together, and as many as the nine smallest letters, X, Z, Y, Q, K, J, N, U, V, with three-fourths of the tenth, O. The many words of Latin origin or composition swell the list to this great number. Our attention is called, in the general Preface, to many words of both native and foreign origin that are treated at great length, and that are of special interest. Not only is this great Dictionary valuable for its minute analysis of the meanings of words, and its tracing of the history of these meanings, far exceeding anything that has been heretofore done, but it is specially valuable for the scientific etymology of English words. "The historical method followed," says Dr. Murray, "has cleared the origin and history of hundreds of words from the errors in which conjectural 'etymology' had involved them; it has established the actual derivation of many, and has left the origin of others as unknown and, to all appearance, lost." It is somewhat remarkable that the etymology of such a common word as *Cut*—which as noun occupies four columns and as verb, along with adverbial combinations, thirteen columns—should be unknown. The earliest example is from Layamon's *Brut*, text B, in the past tense *cutte*, where it replaces *nom* of text A: text B is assigned to 1275 A. D., as against 1205 for text A. We are told that it is "found in end of 13th c., and in common use since the 14th c., being the proper word for the action in question, for which O. E. used *sniðan*, *ceorfan*. . . . The word is not recorded in O. E. (nor in any W. Ger. dialect), and there is no corresponding verb in Romanic." An Old Teutonic stem *\*kut-*, *\*kot-* is regarded as the source of the English verb; but its exact origin is obscure. Dr. Murray, on the authority of Professor Rhys, rejects the conjectural derivation from the Welsh *cwta* 'shoot.' Also, he says that the origin of *cut* = lot and its original sense are uncertain, and he is inclined to regard it as a distinct word from the noun *Cut* derived from the verb. It is historically much older, as the phrase *draw cuts* occurs as early as 1300, whereas the other noun *Cut* is not earlier than the sixteenth century.

As an example of minute analysis, we find under the verb *Cut*, 33, *c*, as early as 1814, "For *cutting* his lectures this morning at eight," an expression so common now as university slang.

The first word in this part, *Crouchmas*, is one of interest, being applied to "The festival of the Invention of the Cross, observed on May 3" from the 14th century on, the earliest example given being from *English Gilds*, dating from 1389. The calendar date for this festival is May 3, but Grein and Wülker have both stated that the Latin 'Life of St. Cyriacus' is given

in the *Acta Sanctorum* under May 4, although a Greek 'Life' belongs to May 3. Brady's *Clavis Calendaria* (1812) gives the date of this festival as May 3, and a church calendar for 1893 lying before the writer has the same date. Also, the Latin 'Life' on which the Anglo-Saxon poem 'Elene' is based has in so many words: "celebrare commemorationem diei in qua inventa est sancta Crux quinto nonarum Maiarum." Can there be any mistake as to the date in the *Acta Sanctorum*? This work is not accessible to me.

It would be interesting to comment on many suggestive words, if time permitted. I would call attention to but one or two. Rosalynde's "gallant *curtelax* upon my thigh," with its various spellings, is nothing more than "A much-perverted form of the word *Cutlass* (in 16th c. *coutelas*, *coutelase*, *cuttleass*, etc.), through the intermediate perversions *cut(t)le-ax*, and *curtelas*, *courtelace*, *curtelace*, the peculiarities of which it combines. The form *curtal ax*, with its variants, was so distinct from *cutlass* that it acquired a kind of permanent standing, the identification of the final part with *ax*, *axe*, being favored by the use of the weapon in delivering slashing blows." We see here the phonetic insertion of *r* and the change of *s* to *x* under the influence of popular etymology. *Coutelas* itself is an "augmentative of *couteau* (*coutel*) 'knife': cognate with It. *coltellaccio*: Lat. type \**cultellāceum*." This is a good illustration of the influence of popular etymology on the form of a word.

Looking for *Cymling*, we find it, but are referred to *Simlin* for further information, the only example given being one from Morse's 'American Geography,' I 192 (1796). Now, *Cymling* is the form given in both Webster and Worcester, but if we consult the cookery books, the form varies greatly. Mrs. Tyree's 'Housekeeping in Old Virginia' gives *Cymlings* in text, but *Cymlins* in index, a common phonetic loss; Mrs. Hollyday's 'Domestic Economy' gives *Cymlings* in text, but *Cymbelines* (!) in index. Here we have the phonetic insertion of *b* and some superfluous *e*'s. We often hear *Cymbkins*, insertion of *b*, after the analogy of *crumble* and *number*, and loss of *g*. It is hard to say which form will survive. The catalogues of garden vegetables give us no help, as they avoid the word and use only *Squash*. The Century Dictionary gives the spellings *Cymbkin* and *Cymbling*; the former is the more common in the Southern States. If, as Worcester says, the word is "akin to *Cymbal* and to Gr. *κνυβίον*," the *b* is not a phonetic insertion, but the word has suffered a phonetic loss.

Following the association of ideas, we look in vain in the first part of C for *Cashaw*, pronounced locally *cushaw*, *u* as in *cut*. The writer has heard it applied to a kind of squash, although White, 'Gardening for the South' (1857), defines it under *Pumpkin* (p. 214), but he says that the pumpkin "has become so crossed and intermingled with the squash that it is difficult to say of some varieties to which species they should be referred." He also says under *Squash* (p. 213): "The Cashaw pumpkin is a pretty good substitute for the winter squash." Bartlett gives: "*Cashaw*, sometimes spelt *Kershaw*. A pumpkin. Western"; but it is also Southern, as I can testify. *Cashaw* given in the Century Dictionary = honey-locust, is a different thing altogether, and this word is omitted. But this must suffice.

J. M. GARNETT.